

Application No. 10/763,519
AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE dated September 21, 2006
Reply to Office Action of April 21, 2006

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A closure mechanism for a beverage preparation machine comprising a fixed lower part and an upper part rotatable relative to the lower part, the upper part being moveable from an open position, in which the upper part is disengaged from the lower part, and a closed position, in which the upper part is engaged with the lower part, the closure mechanism further comprising a clamping lever operable to retain the upper part in the closed position, wherein the clamping lever comprises a first member being pivotably connected at a first pivot to the upper part and a second member having a first end pivotable about a second pivot, an end of the first member and a second end of the second member being pivotably connected together at a third pivot such that the clamping lever has first and second positions of stability, wherein on operation of the clamping lever to move the upper part from the open position to the closed position the clamping lever moves from the first to the second position of stability, and wherein the third pivot is disposed between the first pivot and the second pivot in both the open position and the closed position.

Claim 2 (Original): A closure mechanism as claimed in 1, wherein the clamping lever comprises at least one hook member for engaging a detent on the lower part.

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Claim 3 (Original): A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 2, wherein in the first position of stability the third pivot lies on a first side of a datum line joining the first and second pivot points.

Claim 4 (Original): A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 3, wherein in the second position of stability the third pivot lies on a second side of a datum line joining the first and second pivot points.

Claim 5 (Original): A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 4, wherein the first side of the datum line is nearest the fixed lower part and the second side of the datum line is furthest from the fixed lower part.

Claim 6 (Original): A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 5 wherein the first end of the second member is pivotally connected to the lower part.

Claim 7 (Original): A closure mechanism as claimed in claim 6 wherein the second member comprises a reciprocal member.

Claims 8-14 (Cancelled)

Claim 15 (Previously presented): A closure mechanism for a beverage preparation machine comprising a fixed lower part and an upper part rotatable relative to the lower part, the upper part being moveable from an open position, in which the upper part is disengaged from the lower part, and a closed position, in which the upper part is engaged with the lower part, the closure mechanism further comprising a clamping lever operable to retain the upper part in the closed position, wherein the

clamping lever comprises a first member being pivotably connected at a first pivot to the upper part and a second member having a first end pivotable about a second pivot, an end of the first member and a second end of the second member being pivotably connected together at a third pivot such that the clamping lever has first and second positions of stability, wherein on operation of the clamping lever to move the upper part from the open position to the closed position the clamping lever moves from the first to the second position of stability, wherein the second member comprises a reciprocal member, and wherein the reciprocal member comprises a cylinder, a stem received in said cylinder and a resilient sleeve for biasing said stem into an extended configuration.

Claim 16 (Previously presented): The closure mechanism of claim 15 wherein movement of the clamping lever from the first to the second position of stability is accommodated by deformation of the resilient sleeve.

Claim 17 (Previously presented): The closure mechanism of claim 16 wherein the first member of the clamping lever comprises a U-shaped arm extending round a front side of the beverage preparation machine.

Claim 18 (Previously presented): The closure mechanism of claim 17 wherein the clamping mechanism comprises two second members, one on each side of the beverage preparation machine.

Claim 19 (Previously presented): The closure mechanism of claim 18 wherein the closure mechanism further comprises a cartridge holder interposed

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between the lower part and the upper part and being rotatable relative to the lower part and the upper part.

Claim 20 (Previously presented): The closure mechanism of claim 19 wherein rotation of the upper part toward the lower part causes the upper part to engage the cartridge holder and to move the cartridge holder into contact with the lower part and at the same time to cause, in use, inlet piercing means and the outlet piercing means provided in the lower part to pierce a cartridge received in the cartridge holder.